

Virginia's Transformational Workforce Development Initiative to Fill 75,000 Open Jobs Across the Commonwealth



POWERED BY VIRGINIA'S COMMUNITY COLLEGES

The Challenge: Workers Needed Now!

Virginia is facing a workforce crisis. Record-low unemployment, coupled with a falling rate of labor force participation (Just 64% of working age Virginia adults are actively working or seeking a job) has left Virginia's employers actively searching for tens of thousands of qualified workers to support their businesses. If these jobs are not filled, it means the loss of billions of dollars in economic activity for the Commonwealth.

The Solution: HIRE Virginia

The Virginia Community College System (VCCS) has the solution to fill many of the open jobs — HIRE VIRGINIA. This transformative initiative leverages successful existing programs to accelerate the training, credentialing, and placement of Virginians in available, good-paying jobs. **The initiative focuses on the unfilled middle-skill jobs – those that require some level of credential or certification but do not require a four-year degree – approximately half of the open jobs.** With HIRE Virginia, candidates for these jobs are trained at little or no cost to themselves, accelerating the time to fill these open positions.

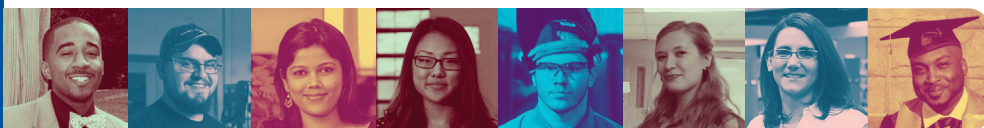
HIRE Virginia's Key Components: Transforming Workforce Development



See reverse for more info on each key component.

HIRE Virginia's ROI: 75,000 Middle-Skill Workers Trained and Placed

HIRE Virginia calls for an investment of \$250 million to help Virginia address critical workforce needs and put Virginians into good-paying jobs. The return on investment (ROI) will be easy to measure. HIRE Virginia will produce 75,000 additional skilled workers over the next three years at an average cost of \$3,333 per credential. Not only does each newly trained and hired Virginian benefit from increased wages and the contributions they make in their community, the businesses that hire them will thrive and grow benefiting the entire Commonwealth.



1. Offer low-cost or no-cost programs leading to employment in high-demand jobs

CHALLENGE: Cost is the single greatest barrier for students enrolling in workforce training and credentialing programs.

SOLUTION: HIRE Virginia will leverage FastForward and G3, two of Virginia's signature workforce education programs that are available at no or low cost for low- and-middle-income students.

COST: Increase Workforce Credentials Grant Funding by \$18.6M to produce an additional 10,000 in-demand credentials each year.

2. Invest in modern labs, classrooms, and equipment

CHALLENGE: Many employers report that they must provide supplemental training to new workers — even those who have earned industry certifications — because workers were trained in dated labs.

SOLUTION: HIRE Virginia will modernize teaching environments and enhance student experiences, in programs that will train workers to fill open jobs.

COST: \$100M for competitive grants to seed new program start-ups and modernized teaching environments throughout the twenty-three community colleges. An employer match and engagement in program planning will be required.

3. Expand dual enrollment to include high demand credentials

CHALLENGE: With a growing number of well-paying, middle-skill jobs and related careers available, Dual Enrollment is one solution to help get high school graduates into those fields quicker.

SOLUTION: HIRE Virginia will enable VCCS to ramp up career technical education (CTE) and FastForward academies on community college campuses, offering high school students access to high-quality certifications leading to jobs in healthcare, behavioral health, advanced manufacturing, and information technology sectors.

COST: \$35M to enroll 12,500 high school students in on-campus CTE and FastForward Academies.

GOVERNOR'S AMENDMENTS: Provide \$15 million to create five pilot Fast Forward academies for high school students.

4. Provide more career services to connect qualified students and employers through an online portal

CHALLENGE: Research reveals that many students do not know where or how to look for jobs. At the same time, employers are challenged in reaching qualified students.

SOLUTION: HIRE Virginia will fund robust career placement offices on every campus, equipped with the technology to connect students and employers, coordinate paid internship and apprenticeship opportunities, identify job opportunities, and provide career counseling and placement support to students.

COST: \$30M to staff career placement services and develop a jobs portal.

GOVERNOR'S AMENDMENTS: Provide \$3 million for one career placement office (23 FTEs) per community college.

5. Increase advising capacity to support students from entry through completion

CHALLENGE: Researchers consistently find that increased access and completion rates occur by ensuring students receive adequate advising and coaching. The current ratio of advisors to students in the VCCS is 1:931, far below the recommended standard of 1:200.

SOLUTION: HIRE Virginia will add 400 advisors, bringing the advisor to student ratio to 1:336.

COST: \$40.4M to add 400 advisors.

6. Address students' mental health barriers

CHALLENGE: Today's students are experiencing high levels of pandemic-related stress, anxiety, and depression. Quality mental health services are key to supporting students through their educational programs and into the workforce.

SOLUTION: VCCS proposes using third-party providers to deliver tele-mental health services, available to student 24 hours a day.

COST: \$7.2M for a three-year contract.

GOVERNOR'S AMENDMENTS: Adds \$9 million to expand tele-behavioral health services in public schools and on college campuses.

7. Create HIRE Virginia awareness through a statewide campaign

CHALLENGE: Students often aren't aware of in-demand programs and how to access them.

SOLUTION: HIRE Virginia includes a statewide information awareness campaign — a first for VCCS — to help match workers to in-demand programs and employers to trained workers.

COST: \$18M to increase awareness of HIRE Virginia opportunities.

GOVERNOR'S AMENDMENTS: \$3 million.

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